

# COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

## **Size of the Problem**

### ***Alcohol and Drug Abuse***

Actual numbers of individuals affected are difficult to ascertain. U.T. estimates that 31 percent of residents use alcohol and 13 percent regularly use illegal drugs. 87 percent of respondents in our community survey believed alcohol and drug abuse was a serious health concern for the community.

### ***Cancer***

According to the American Cancer Society, Decatur County will have approximately 50 new cases of cancer in 1997 or 0.5 percent of the population. Decatur County had 21 cancer deaths in 1993, 29 in 1994, and 43 in 1995. In general during 1997, 1.7 percent of the population (185 individuals) will be receiving medical care for cancer.

### ***Teen Pregnancy/Sex Among Teens***

In our community survey, 81 percent of respondents listed sex among teens as a serious health concern. In a statewide survey of high school students, 64 percent of males and 57 percent of females reported having had sexual intercourse. Fifty-six percent of respondents reported having had sexual intercourse for the first time before age 15. The rates of teen pregnancy in the community are consistently lower than State rates. In 1995 there were 33 births to residents of the county under the age of 19.

## ***Stress***

In a regional survey of high school students, 11 percent reported feeling severe stress and 21 percent reported almost always feeling depressed or unhappy. In our community survey, 75 percent of respondents listed stress as a serious health problem.

### ***Unintended Pregnancy***

It is estimated that 60 percent of pregnancies are unintended. Based on this percentage, approximately 92 unintended pregnancies occur in Decatur County each year. In our community survey, 70 percent of respondents listed unintended pregnancy as a serious health issue.

### ***Hypertension***

The mortality rate from cerebrovascular disease in Decatur County in 1994 was 58.2 deaths per 1,000 lives. The rate for the state was 80.8. It is estimated that approximately 1,121 individuals or about 11 percent of the population suffer from hypertension.

### ***Allergies***

The national prevalence for hay fever is 100.7 per 1,000 persons or about 1,077 county residents. The prevalence of asthma is 56.1 per 1,000 or approximately 600 county residents.